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1905

SONGS *by the* SEDGES

ELLEN BRAINERD PECK





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SONGS BY THE SEDGES

BY

ELLEN BRAINERD PECK



BOSTON
RICHARD G. BADGER
The Gorham Press
1905

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CLASS No. XNo. No.
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PS 3531
.E262 S6
1905

Printed at
THE GORHAM PRESS
Boston, U. S. A.

TO MY MOTHER
MARY DUFFIELD PECK

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SONGS BY THE SEDGES

THE PINK HEDGE-ROSE

By the wooded pathway
 A blushing blossom grows.
 Its petals open wide
 To the gold noon-tide,
Blossoming in beauty,
 Where the sunshine flows,
And it flirteth, aye, it flirteth,
 In many a dainty pose,
A-tossing on the briar,
 The pink hedge-rose,

Over fields a-floating
 The summer soft wind blows,
 A-singing o'er the rye,
 Lightly floating by
Fragrant sunny meadows
 Where the long grass grows ;
But it lingers, aye, it lingers,
 Just to whisper as it goes
To its pretty, nodding gossip,
 The pink hedge-rose

Unto the dewy dawn
 The petals fair unclose,
 But when a silver star
 In the west afar,
Along the dusking evening
 Its faint light shows,
Then the flower foldeth, foldeth,
 Silken leaves in sweet repose,
Drooping dreamily till morning,
 The pink-hedge-rose.

But sadly soon the wind,
 A-whisper as it goes,
 Across the field and lane
 Will seeking go in vain,
For a wayside flower,
 The sweetest that it knows;
'Twill be sighing, aye, be sighing,
 Where the lonely pathway shows
Naught of its pretty gossip,
 The pink hedge-rose.

CONTENTMENT

To the world's great noisy highways,
Here and there, lead quiet by-ways.
Often are these still roads fairest,
Paths made fair by blossoms rarest.
Many o'er the by-ways going,
Heeding not, pass on unknowing.
For most sweet, beyond all seeming,
Blooms a flower, in their dreaming.
And their eyes looked forward ever,
Till a road their road doth sever.
On this highway haste they, drifting
As the sands on sea-shore shifting.
Searching, with an anxious longing,
Where the careless crowds pass thronging.
Flowerless proves the path and dreary,
And the tired feet and weary,
Turning from the mighty highway
Stray, at peace, along the by-way.
When, beside the path up-growing,
Springs the flower, they sought unknowing.

THE VIRGINIA REEL

While softly glows the candle-light,
 Adown the dim, wainscoted hall,
Upon the silver, shimmering bright,
 Of antique candelabras tall,
In merry eyes it coyly peers,
 The love-lit glances to reveal
Of happy maids and cavaliers,
 Who dance the old Virginia reel.

Clad in a gown of ample flow,
 Coquettish patches on the face,
With powdered hair, as long ago,
 And quaint and pretty air of grace,
Each tripping maid with lightsome tread,
 In dainty shoes, most high of heel,
With eyes that laugh and up-tossed head,
 Glides through the old Virginia reel.

The gleam of mellow candle-light
 Weaves golden meshes of romance,
And Cupid speeds his arrow's flight
 Amid the mazes of the dance,
Just as in past colonial years,
 When, to the music's frolic peal,
The happy maids and cavaliers
 Danced in the old Virginia reel.

AN OLD BROCADE

A BALLADE.

Where stretched the attic rafters brown,
Mid dusk almost like night,
A little wrinkled old-time gown
Was hung away from sight—
Where wandering sunbeams, like a sprite
Through gapping crannies strayed,
To touch into past luster bright
The faded old brocade.

The dust of years had sifted down
Upon its satin white;
The sheen, that made its beauty's crown,
Was dimmed and faded quite;
Around it, woven left and right,
The spiders webs had made,
And tiny scampering mice took fright,
To see the old brocade—

The praises at that ball in town,
Its wearer did invite,
In famous days of its renown,
Lives no one to recite;
When it was at the fashion's height,
And minuets were played;
Since then, the years have winged their flight
Above the old brocade.

ENVOY.

Though all forgot its sorry plight,
Yet stealing sunbeams laid
Oft times, a soft remembering light
Upon the old brocade.

TONIGHT

I see tonight
A picture fair—so fair;
Framed with sweet thoughts,
Fond memories and rare.

A twilight sky,
Still lit with sunset gold,
A burnished sea,
A girl I loved of old.

The gentle winds
Fan cheeks of rose-like glow,
Her braided locks
Toss softly to and fro.

I moor my boat,
That swiftly cleft the sea,
A silver path,
Betwixt my love and me.

I lift my eyes—
Ah dream, though sweet, take flight,
For she is here,
I touch her hands tonight.

THE BIRDS

The whippoorwill, across the gloom,
Calls out o'er fragrant gardens' bloom.
The lonely owl the hush doth mar,
From steepy, woodland hill afar.
But thou, oh, little birds of day,
In restful silence stilly be,
While soft winds sigh themselves away,
And stars swim in the dark sky sea.

Sleep, robin, sleep!
Hush, bright blue jay!
Swallow, cease your darting flight!
Brown sparrow, rest
Upon your nest!
For it is night.

Within the world of men is woe,
And sad thought flieth to and fro.
It may not bide, glad birds, as thou,
Upon some leafy, sheltering bough.
For human kind, on sleep's fair way,
No surcease from all sorrow seems;
Thought mocketh rest, and, till the day,
It wandereth, on and on, in dreams.

Sleep, red-bird, sleep!
Hush, sombre crow!
Cease, humming bird, your wildering flight!
Wee wren, brood thou!
Blackbird, rest now!
For it is night.

Oh, little hearts, beneath the wing,
That tremble at the songs you sing,
Where heavy care can never lie,
You are at peace, and know not why.
Your sweet calls, falling down the air,
Float where the slumbrous shadows sweep,
And soft and softer, everywhere,
They die away in blessed sleep.

Sleep, robin, sleep!
Hush, bright blue jay!
Swallow, cease your darting flight!
Brown sparrow, rest
Upon your nest!
For it is night.

THE HERB GARDEN

On the garden's southern side
Some old-time simples scent the air;
Once a house-wife took a pride
In tending them with watchful care;
Oft at work a-weeding there
Her busy hands flew, to and fro,
Making all so neat and fair,
In long summers, years ago.

'Twas one Mistress Betty Ann,
With a wise, far-seeing eye,
Sowed the seeds, with thrifty plan,
To gather herbs in falls to dry,—
Fragrant bunches which hung high
From the rafters long and low,
Close the dusky fire-place by,
In the winters, years ago.

Fine roses fill the garden now
That once the sweet old roses knew,
And stalks of gladiolas bow
Where once the frail day-lilies blew,
But, as a spirit wandering through
The winding paths, faint perfumes blow
From the herbs which Betty grew,
In long summers, years ago.

Time has sped since Betty Ann
Gave the sweet herb garden care,
But murmuring winds across it fan,
As if again a voice sang there,
And small, white hands were wandering where
They moved, in past days, to and fro,
Among the purple blossoms fair,
In long summers, years ago.

THE GOLDEN ROD

What time the early cricket trills
His blithe and cheery roundelay,
Whose merry, clear-toned chirrup fills
The dreamful golden-tinted day;
'Tis then the fields lie golden too,
With tasseled plumes, that gayly nod,
When e'er the wild breeze dances through
The legions of the golden rod.

AT NOON TIDE

Beside the brooklet's laughing fall,
The glossy rushes flash their sheen,
Around the meadow's stretch of green,
A-tumble stands the old stone wall.

Between the stones, lichened and grey,
In crevices the slim shoots twine,
Of the wild tangled berry-vine,
Untutored, roving all astray.

Here, when the shrill cicada sings,
Untiring, in the gold-third noon,
And sleepy mid-day seems acroon,
With murmurous grass-dwelling things,

How sweet to lie beside the stream,
And idly look upon the sky;
There watch the rifted clouds drift by,
And not to think, but only dream.

THE PATH

The path that leads to her
Winds by the old stone wall,
Where branches look
Into the brook,
And berry-vines grow tall;
There wild flowers spring
To blossoming,
From daisy to the burr,
So lovely is it, all in all,
The path that leads to her.

The path that leads to her
Is wondrous in the night,
Where shadows scar.
And gleam of star,
Slips down the dusky light,
Between the trees;
And melodies
Rise from the insect whirr.
While glimpsing fire-flies make more bright
The path that leads to her.

The path that leads to her,
Oh, memory take me there,
To years I knew,
When dreams came true,
And life was sweet and fair;
And let me hark,
Against the dark,
Her glowing garments stir,
Along the way close bound with care—
The path that leads to her.

THE OLD FIRE-PLACE

'Twas built in days so long ago,
This fire-place tall and wide;
And no one now can ever know
Who, in the winter-tide,
Sat by the warm ingle
And heard the wind mingle
With snow and sleet outside.

Upon the stones now black with time
Stretches the golden glow,
The shining flames that redly climb
Their jagged shadows throw,
The log's drowsy humming
In monotone coming
Sounds weirdly soft and low.

Along the vistas of the past,
Faint visions seem to stray,
The print of many feet is cast
Upon the hearth-stone grey.
In dark crannies keeping,
Dim secrets lie sleeping
Where watch the stones alway.

The dreams that come within its light,
The fire-lit silence fill,
While shadows flit from out the night
And steal o'er time's door-sill,
Through memory's paths, weary
Come thought-phantoms eerie
Around us wan and still.

Amid the night there falls a spell
Weaved where the fire-light plays,
For fancies past and future dwell
Where shines the ruddy blaze;

Aloft, in our dreaming,
Air castles are gleaming,
Alight with lambent rays.

Now when the long cold nights begin,
Near to the fire-place wide,
We sit, when ev'en-light creeps in,
Its cosy hearth beside,
Close by the bright ingle
And hear the wind mingle
With sleet and snow outside.

THE SPINET

On the tinkling notes, and faint,
Of the spinet old and quaint,
Once pretty hands oft lightly strayed,
Coaxing gentle melodies,
From the slender ivory keys,
In days when dainty tunes were played.

In frock of dimity bedight,
Of a fashion then the height,
Perchance, some maid, demure and slim
Practiced here a canzonet,
Or a graceful minuet,
In studied measure, queer and prim.

Now untouched the keys lie hid ;
Silence sleeps beneath the lid.
And the voiceless spinet seems
Haunted with refrains of song,
That to other days belong
And eloquent of olden dreams.

THE GARDEN

Oh, just at dusk, in chorused din,
The garden crickets loud begin,
Where busy, gloaming spiders spin
Their balconies of webbing thin,
 Soft, faery lace,
 In many a place,
The grasses twining, out and in.

The "four o'clocks" are milky white,
Ghostly in the blue of night,
Tremulous with life's delight,
The garden border making bright,
 And to and fro,
 The white moths go,
Among the blooms, in wandering flight.

THE DREAMS

Their whereabouts we do not know,
So soft they come, so still they go,
 The dreams;
A mist enfolds them where they stray,
So dusky shadowed, far away,
 It seems.

There dwell no reasons, where they are,
There is no near, nor any far,
 Nor where;
All happens any way or how,
The past and future, both are now,
 Off there.

And gliding down night's silent steep
They wander to the realms of sleep,
 And tell
The wonders of that Dreamland fair,
Of long-lost thoughts and fancies, where
 They dwell.

A MEMORY

When sunset tapers, flickering dim,
Die out before the moon,
I dream I hear the evening hymn,
With all its rhythmic tune,
The ocean utters at its brim
On some still afternoon.

It comes from where marsh grasses stand,
Touched into wands of gold,
Where glow the sea and yellow strand,
With mystic light untold,
Until seems all the shadowy land
Some faery world of old.

It floats across the cliffs of brown
Where flight the sea-gull stays,
And softly goes a-singing down
The quiet, winding ways
Within that quaint and olden town
Of unforgotten days.

And, ere the first soft stars are lit,
On night winds, as they flee,
The song, as I remember it,
Seems drifting up to me
From where the sleepy white gulls sit
And brood beside the sea

AT FIVE O'CLOCK

At five o'clock in winter,
When dusk makes day-beams flee,
Then at her tiny table
Fair Elizabeth pours tea.

Antique is her tea-table,
Of rose-wood all a-shine,
Wrought o'er with golden trimmings,
Of curious design.

A flowered square upon it
Of snowy damask lies,
And there the brazen kettle
Gives forth its humming sighs.

Rare spoons are there, Florentine,
Frail cups from lands afar,
Whence floats the fragrant incense
From quaint Japonica.

The tinted lamps' soft glimmer
A glamour throws about,
But leaves in dusk the corners,
Where shadows dark creep out.

Faint glows the lamp Pompeian,
And wonder falls on me,
What did Pompeii's maidens
At five o'clock for tea?

Thus dreams of other ages
In present time are caught,
And vagrant fancies wander
Across the path of thought.

At five o'clock in winter,
How oft I go to see,
Beside her tiny table,
Fair Elizabeth pour tea.

SPRING'S CARNIVAL

When smiles the spring-tide of the year,
How murmurous are the winds that blow!
The daffodil and crocus glow—
The tender blades of grass appear.

In even furrows, side by side,
The steaming earth lies rich and brown,
The life-inspiring sun sends down
A warmth of gold-light far and wide.

The tearful showers that hide the sun,
But fall in silver drops a space—
Then gold and azure take their place,
So quickly is the soft rain done.

For waking from their dreamless sleep—
Earth's children in the quickening air,
In joy uprising everywhere,
The carnival of spring-tide keep.

VIOLET

My sweet one wore all tied about
Her hair a kerchief blue;
Her eyes upon the sea looked out,
When twilight shadows grew;
The new moon slid down toward the sea
Against the paled sunset,
As on the old dock watched for me
Fair Violet.

The night wind made a cheery din,
The water rippled low,
And swift my boat came sailing in
Amid the purple glow;
The slim, young moon dropped to the sea;
One silver tip was wet;

Still on the old dock watched for me
Dear Violet.

My sweet one wore all tied about
Her hair a kerchief blue;
So pure her face no heart could doubt
She steadfast was and true,
The sickle moon fell in the sea;
My love's my own eyes met;
And now she ever is to me
My Violet.

MY GRANDFATHER'S SCRAP-BOOK

It was a day when on the pane
The wild wind dashed the tireless rain,
And brawling grew the brook,
That, in the attic, on a quest,
Obeying fancy's odd behest,
I found within an ancient chest
My grandfather's scrap-book.

A gabled window dimly flung
A soft light where the cobwebs hung,
Within a corner nook,
And there, within the shadows gray,
Beneath imagination's sway,
I lived, in thought, the vanished day
Of grandfather's scrap-book.

I gazed on many a gay vignette,
And faces cut in silhouette,
With quaint, old-fashioned look,—
On pictured ladies, fair and slim,
And dainty verses faded dim,
With sentiments so sweet and prim
In grandfather's scrap-book.

Amid the relics oft I spied,
Souvenirs of family pride,
 That of the past partook,—
Some scion honored by his land
Remembered here, or in fine hand
The autograph of some one grand,
 In grandfather's scrap-book.

The hours, beguiling, grew apace,
And I forgot the time and place,
 And seemed to hear, oddzook!
A-pealing through the dusk, eft soon,
A merry, stately, old dance tune,
And clack and tread of high-heeled shoon,
 Near grandfather's scrap-book.

So dreamed I, till, all hushed the rain,—
Till through a tiny, dusty pane
 A trembling star-ray shook,
And misty shadows, gathering, rose
Around my visioned belles and beaux,
And told me it was time to close
 My grandfather's scrap-book.

THE LIGHT-SHIP

I am the light-ship, and long and grim ;
Where the landsman sees me in the distance dim,
I swing at anchor, with the tides, off-shore,
By a perilous reef, where the waves break hoar.
 Aye at my post,
 Foul weather or fine,
Reef-sentinel, of the great ship-line,
 A solemn duty mine.

To-night, as the gray of the mist folds in,
Swathing the waters in cerements thin,
While shrill, down the wind, pipes the petrel's cry,
And hurtling around me the sea-birds fly,
 I keep my post,
 For weal or for woe,
Reef-sentinel, and the great ships know,
 In passing to and fro.

And the dark falls here, full of sound, yet lone,
With the moving of waters, and winds that moan,
As I rock in the trough of the rolling sea,—
Lo, I heed not the wild monotony,
 Aye at my post,
 While the strong waves leap,
Reef-sentinel, where black dangers sleep,
 A tireless watch I keep.

Through the shadows that lie on sea and strand,
Now beckon me, soft, sister lights in land,
And I flash reply, aloft from my spars,
Where the twin lights gleam like prisoned stars.
 Aye at my post,
 Foul weather or fine,
Reef-sentinel, of the great ship-line,
 A solemn duty mine.

WHERE FIELDS LIE WHITE

Where fields lie white beneath the snow
The grasses sleep,
Here cold wild winds of winter blow,
Yet, soon, will April rain-drops weep
And happy sea-born breezes go,
Singing landward, soft and low,
Where fields lie white beneath the snow.

Still listening for the call they know
Life's mysteries are,
Here by the waters' ebb and flow,
Yet, soon, each grass-blade scimitar
Shall taper, slim, toward skies that glow,
In joyance waving, to and fro,
Where fields lie white beneath the snow.

ROSES

Perchance you may have met my love
A-wandering down some country lane,
When all the sky was blue above,
And sunlight fell in golden rain,
And roses here,
And roses there,
Along the path bloomed everywhere.

Perchance you looked into her eyes,
Like violets, all purple-deep,
And tender as the twilight skies,
So luminous with thoughts they keep,
Where roses sweet,
With mystic spell,
In drifting showers of petals fell.

My love, perchance, you may have met,
I have but seen her in a dream,
A face with eyes of violet;
Ah, still to me most real they seem,
 Those roses here
 And roses there,
That by her path bloomed everywhere.

A PICTURE

This is the woodland way,
 Silvery tumbles the fall,
Dimming the lovely glade,
 Trees that are gnarled and tall.

Rays of the sun-light's sheen,
 Stray to the bosky nook,
Gleam on the mosses green,
 Dance on the rippling brook.

Lo! neath the bough's dark reach,
 A nymph glads the dusky light,
Straight as the sapling beech,
 Fair in her robe of white.

Hair, as the ripe grain, gold,
 Shines on the graceful head;
Eyes of a hue untold;
 Lips like an arch of red.

Here, in the autumn day,
 Lost in the past I seem;
Forgotten the woodland way,
 And in my heart a dream.

THE CHARM

A wee and bonny maiden,
With rosy cheeks aglow,
Whose thoughts were fancy-laden,
And eyes black as the sloe,
Once spied a four-leaf clover,
And hid it in her shoe,
A charm, e'er day was over,
To bring her lover true.

And when the sun went drifting
Down in the golden west,
Her happy eyes uplifting,
Saw some one she loved best;
While smiles came all unbidden,
She murmured, "Is it you!
How did you know I'd hidden
That clover in my shoe?"

SNOW FANCIES

Now the grey lights dull the sky,
Thro' the air,
Every-where,
Down the fleecy snow-flakes fly.

Starry shapes, that sway and shift
Fleetly whirl,
Swiftly twirl,
Hither, thither, as they drift.

When to watch them we begin,
In the gloom,
They assume
Forms fantastic as they spin—

Fairy fabrics do they seem,
Made of mist,
Blown atwist
Lightsome as an airy dream.

Flowers fashioned for a fay,
Ice-spun rare,
Clusters fair
Filling all the shadowed day—

Crystal barques where pixies ride,
Lo they float,
Like a mote,
On the air's pellucid tide.

Filmy flake of fret-work fine,
Beauty fraught,
Thou wert wrought
By a Master-hand divine.

THE GARDEN I LOVE BEST

One big star shone
In the primrose sky,
In the primrose sky of the west ;
To a lullaby
Had the bird-songs grown
In the garden I love the best.

In the garden that stretches down to the sea,
To the whispering sedge
At the water's edge,
Where the wind creeps lonesomely.

One big red rose
In the garden grew,
Blossoming grew, down by the sea ;
I gave it you,
At the evening's close,
And you gave your heart to me.

In the garden that stretches down to the sea,
To the whispering sedge
At the water's edge,
Where the wind creeps lonesomely.

The big star shone
Its glow in your eyes,
The red rose lay on your breast ;
'Neath the primrose skies
We were alone,
In the garden I love the best.

In the garden that stretches down to the sea,
To the whispering sedge
At the water's edge,
Where the wind creeps lonesomely.

A LULLABY

Hark, the song the silver rain,
Sings against the window pane,
Sings so sweet and soft and low,
Sings while twilight shadows grow
A little tune to "go-to-sleep,"
While the tiny rain-drops keep
Falling from the evening sky
In lullaby, in lullaby.

Hark, the way the trees reply,
To the rain-drops drifting by.
'Tis a drowsy, crooning, heart!
Listen how it whispers near,
Near and nearer seems to creep,
A little tune to "go-to-sleep;"
So at night the trees reply,
To the rain-drops drifting by.

Through the twilight comes a dream,
And the countless rain-drops seem,
Every one a silver bead,
Slipping down a shining reed,
Making through the shadowy deep,
A little song of "go-to-sleep,"
Falling from the evening sky,
In lullaby, in lullaby.

A LULLABY

The yellow moon
Rides high, rides high,
A whistling tune
Across the sky
The chill wind sings;
And, to and fro,
Within the dusk
The branches blow.

This cold, pale night!
Its filmy lace
The hoar frost, white,
Hath come to trace
Upon the pane;
And, to and fro,
A-tossing high,
The branches blow.

Roses are fair,
'Neath Dreamland skies,
And blooming there,
Blue as thy eyes,
The violet buds;
Here, to and fro,
With cold acreak
The branches blow.

Then give thy hand
To some dream, sweet,
In slumber land
'T will guide thy feet
On happy ways;
Now, to and fro,
In ghostly way
The branches blow.

Oh! jewel star,
In evening set,
So still and far,
A dream hath met
My baby now;
And, to and fro,
With lullaby,
The branches blow.

A LULLABY

Ho laddie! how the stars dance out,
Amid the dark that's all about.

 There is no doubt
Tonight they hold a merry rout,
Ho laddie! how the stars dance out.

Hist laddie! hear the night wind blow,
An eerie tune it seems to throw,
 The wild notes go
Along the night, now loud now low,
Hist laddie, hear the night wind blow.

Hi laddie! don't you see him creep,
The sand-man, up the shadowed steep,
 So cool and deep,
To bring you fairy gifts of sleep ?
Hi laddie! don't you see him creep?

Hush laddie, now the night wind sings,
And hours drift by on dusky wings,
 While star-light flings
Its silver sheen and sweet dreams brings.
Hush laddie, now the night wind sings.

THE COMING OF THE SHEPHERDS

Madonna, Madonna,
The night-dark was lone;
The birds long had nested,
The beasts preyward gone;
Over hill, over valley,
The wind softly beat,
Through the shadow and hush,
With hurrying feet.

Madonna, Madonna,
While weary earth slept,
On the field of Judea
Our night-watch we kept,
And Syria's sky
Was gemmed as of old
With the hosts of the stars
That gleamed on the fold.

Madonna, Madonna,
An angel most bright,
Lo! poured down around us
The splendor of light;
Fear fell on our hearts,
In the glory he made;
But spake us the angel:
"Be thou not afraid."

Madonna, Madonna,
Glad tidings he told,
About us forgotten,
The night, and the cold,
Where, radiant, sudden,
A fair angel throng
Filled the listening air
With raptures of song.

Madonna, Madonna,
The night groweth wan ;
In the east shineth pale
The star of the dawn ;
Over hill, over valley,
Fleeth shadow away,
And sweet the wind singeth
As breaketh the day.

Madonna, Madonna,
Show us, we pray thee,
Thy Baby, Divine One,
We hasted to see,
And onward, rejoicing,
To men we will sing
The birth of the Saviour
And Israel's king.

PEGGY'S KERCHIEF

Yellow, for the passing years
Have with sere touch dimmed it,
And the hands are vanished long
That in the old times trimmed it,
While a sweet herb's fragrance faint
Each filmy fold discloses,—
The muslin kerchief, broidered white,
With roses.

Peggy, she my great, great aunt,
On gala days to don it,
With her skilful fingers fleet
Put broideries upon it,
And, as other maids, I wis,
Oft sat with dreamy glances,
The while, she weaved, 'tween silken stitch,
Romances.

When so fine and daintily,
Flower-broidered, Peggy made it,
With slender sprigs of lavender
Away with care she laid it,
Yet, as springs to summers turned,
And falls to winters speeded,
Soft, fold on fold, the kerchief lay
Unheeded.

But, as a spring-tide blossom dies,
So Peggy, ere she wore it,
And with the scent of lavender
That subtly hovers o'er it,
Breathing of the years ago,
All undisturbed reposes
The muslin kerchief, broidered white,
With roses.

MY LADY

When twilight blue is the west afar,
And shadows soft are here,
As the night-sky loves the first, pure star,
So is my lady to me dear.

When sparkling down a dusky dell,
A brook doth crystal flow,
As through the wild glade speeds the fell.
My thought doth to my lady go.

When on the glisten of the seas
The lightsome winds rejoice,
As the wavelets leap into the breeze,
So my heart to my lady's voice.

When glad spring steps from winter glooms
To sweeten every place,
As lovely as the flowery blooms
Is the look in my lady's face.

My days with laughter's tune are rife
Where come not care nor fear:
More than I liketh my fair life
So is my lady to me dear.

A LOVE SONG

O'er the meadow flower-pied,
Lightly, fleetly breezes spring;
By the winding river-side,
Soft, the lissome sedges sing
A quaint love-lilt I fancy,
Always known to queer old Pan,
Since the reeds to grow began,
Hear it, sweet, my Nancy!

Above us all the arching sky
Stretches wide its spring-tide blue;
Swiftly-darting birds go by,
Singing blithely, gayly too,
This quaint love-lilt I fancy,
Ever cherished since of old
In their little hearts of gold,
Hear it, sweet, my Nancy!

Pretty one, now it is spring,
In the carol of the bird
In the flowers' blossoming
In the lithe, green sedges heard
Lo! the quaint love-lilt I fancy,
That my heart, dear, sings to you,
With unfaltering cadence true;
Hear it, sweet, my Nancy!

NIGHT

Across the lonesome sea-flats
The purple shadows crept ;
In the border-land of marshes
The lapping waters wept ;
Soft, in the grasses nested,
The weary sea-bird slept.

Beneath the moon the ripples
Glistened, silver-tipped ;
The wan white stars were lustreless,
Where the black horizon dipped,
Above the darksome meadows,
Through whose reeds the fire-fly slipped.

On swept the low-voiced breezes
That, mocking, laughed and sighed,
And brushed with wings invisible
The music of the tide ;
They seemed some souls in grieving,
Their own grief to deride.

Beside the moon-lit waters
The sleeping hamlet lay ;
Still, in the dreamy night-time
It rested from the day,
And tender on the dwellings
Lay the moon-beams' mystic play.

The light of day is joyful,
Exultant, in its birth,
As to the land is sun-warmth,
So to our life is mirth,
But on the heart dwells sorrow,
As moonlight on the earth.

A spell is weaved of shadows,
With weird, pale moonlight wrought,—
A magic spell of silence,—
And all the night is fraught
With the poetry of wonder
And deep and solemn thought.

A MOON-BEAM

Where the manor built of olden
Dreary is beneath the trees,
Swift the wilding bird on-flitteth,
Singeth lonesomely the breeze.

Ever there a sadness reigneth,
Since a foot-fall on the floors
No more, like a fairy's, trippeth
Lightly down the corridors.

For, in by-gone days, a maiden,
With her lips a-rift with song,
And with soft eyes, pansy-purple,
Stepped the sombre rooms among.

Whiter than the snow-drop fragile,
In the old house bloomed her face;
Her's the beauty of a moon-beam,
Silvering some dusky place.

Few there be who now remember
The night of winter, long ago,
When an angel came and bore her
Far across the fields of snow.

As a tiny moon-beam, wavering,
Tarries but awhile at play,
So the little maid in silence
Drifted from my life away.

A NEW YEAR SONG

The year has vanished ; day by day
His life scroll was unrolled,
And now the New Year treads the way,
Long trodden by the Old,
The way of joy,
Without alloy,
And sorrow too untold.

The old year puts his burden by,
The New Year, brave and young
A burden takes without a sigh,
With all its songs unsung,
Its future fears,
And unshed tears,
And coming smiles among.

Old year take with you in your flight,
The hunger, thirst and fear,
All power be to the rule of right,
Let evil disappear,
Be good fights won,
New themes begun,
In this glad coming year.

CHLOE

Out in the orchard,
The bent old apple tree,
Weighted,
And white-freighted,
A-flutter seems to be,
As amid the branches
The wind sings merrily.

Out in the orchard,
So fair beneath its shade,
Smiling,
And beguiling,
She watches sunset fade,
Pretty little Chloe,
A dainty, gold-haired maid.

Out in the orchard,
As dark the shadows loom,
Rifted
By the drifted
Soft starlight through the gloom,
I kiss pretty Chloe
Beneath the apple-bloom.

PHYLLIS

Thine are the eyes that I love,
Phyllis, my beauty, my fair—
Gray as the wing of a dove,
Brushing the silver dawn air
Down in their wildering deeps,
Wonderful tenderness lies;
Cupid, the elf, only sleeps,
Phyllis, my fair, in your eyes.

Thine are the eyes to me dear,
Phyllis, so dainty and fine,
Where merry witcheries peer,
Wells of the spirit's sunshine.
Swift as a star's golden beam,
The glance of sweet coquetry flies,
Airy as gossamer dream,
Phyllis, my fair, from your eyes.

Though fades the sun's dazzling light,
Dimming the azure of day,
Sunshine will never take flight
Afar from those orbs, perfect gray.
Fortune her favor may take,
Whither her fickle will flies,
Could I, the elf, Cupid wake,
Phyllis, my fair, in your eyes.

A PINCH OF SNUFF

Oh, let us sing,
Those times sedate,
When, long ago,
With air of state,
The cavalier,
Courtly and grand,
A box of snuff,
Bore in his hand.

A silken suit,
The gallant wore,
Buckles a gleam,
Gold lace galore,
A powdered wig,
Quaint frills and ruff,
Wondrous his mien,
With box of snuff.

Perchance of gold,
This trifle fine,
With jewelled lid,
Of rich design,
A dainty box,
Not out of place,
Held in the style,
Of golden grace.

How sadly changed,
These present days!
Prosaic are,
The modes and ways,
No gallant more
Dons wig and ruff,
Or takes with joy,
A pinch of snuff.

HER GARDEN

Oh, yellow gleams the daffodil,
In the garden over the way!
There the sun-beams dance at will;
The winds coquette at play;
'Tis the garden sweet of Tabitha Gray.

Tabitha Gray is tall and fair,
With cheeks like a June-tide rose;
A golden shine glints in her hair;
A tint in her curved lip flows,
As red as the crimson cherry glows.

Dark as the deep of wood-land pool,
Where the clear, brown shadow lies,
Glistening in a fern-dell cool,
Is the light of her wonderful eyes,
Where tenderness with laughing vies.

Now that the sun glides off to rest,
And the fresh, soft breezes stray
From the beauty of the west,
Would I were over the way,
In the garden sweet of Tabitha Gray!

WILL SHAKESPEARE

Long years ago by Avon side
A youth fared in the summer-tide,
When golden sunshine poured its sheen
Across the flowery fields of green
Where nature wove a tapestry
Along the path, that smiled between
Quaint Stratford town and Shuttery.

A comely youth, one fair of face,
In sinew strong, and lithe with grace,
For whom the land was vision-strown
With pageants, as he strayed alone
 With dreams, his company, the way,
Claiming a thought-world as his own,
 Where lightning chains of fancy play.

The good folk of old Stratford town,
Caught betwixt a laugh and frown,
Mayhap would mutter, with a sigh:
Mayhap would mutter, with a sigh:
"Yon wild Will Shakespeare passeth by.
 Beshrew the lad, where hastes he now?
Mischief hath home within his eye,
 A saint's look lodges on his brow."

Long, long hath thou been gone, rare Will,
Yet ever wondrous memories thrill
About your place, now you are dead;
Glad field and wood that knew your tread,
 Whose foot was fleetest on the down
And in the dance, so gayly sped
 The lightest heart in Stratford town.

Ho, traveller! who hast suffered much,
By Avon bow, for with a touch
This Shakespeare painted grief of soul;
He knew joy's depth, gay pleasure's *role*,
 And folly's evanescent gleam;
True inspiration lit the scroll
 Whereon he wrote life's passing dream.

THE EARLY MIST

When paling stars their soft rays throw,
And winds their matins sing,
When faintly gleams the opal glow
That skies of morning bring—
Then little mists arise from sleep,
By gentle breezes fanned,
And moving as the sea-birds sweep,
They wander toward the land.

They float above the meadows brown,
So sheer and wan and white,
And there they softly settle down,
Aweary with their flight.
When East shines with a golden rift,
Again they gently flee,
And with the tints of dawning drift
Across the silver sea.

A GARDEN

In a fragrant garden,
Filled with radiant bloom,
Dance the ragged sailors,
Waves the cockscomb's plume;

Here ablaze with color,
A tall and stately row,
Stand like gaudy sentinels,
The hollyhocks ablou.

On the brier-roses,
Swing those murmurous guests,
Laden bees a-crooning,
On their honey quests;

Mid the gay nasturtiums,
Hither, thither dart.
Linger, musing lowly,
On the bleeding-heart.

Doris, of the blossoms
Is weaving a bouquet,
Sprigged with coriander,
And slim, fennel spray.

From this quaint old garden,
Where, as long ago,
Stand, like gaudy sentinels
The hollyhocks ablou.

HER RUFF

She smiles at me
So prettily,
 Above her ruff,
Made dainty white,
Of silken, light
 And gauzy stuff.

Her dimpled chin
Is nested in
 The filmy lace;
A rosebud blow,
Enshrined in snow,
 Her flower-face.

Oft in the dance
She darts a glance
 From mirth-lit eyes—
A Cupid's dart,
Tipped with love's smart,
 That careless flies.

So sweet and fair,
Why should she care?
 It is enough,
She smiles at me
So prettily,
 Above her ruff.

AN OLD SONG

The first love is the best love,
And through the changing years,
Wherever I may wander,
My first love's face appears.
Within the shrine of memory
No other face may rest
Upon my heart as hers does—
"The first love is the best."

The first love is the best love ;
No other voice as sweet
Comes softly with fond cadences
My happy ears to greet,
As hers, with accents tender,
That once my name caressed.
Dear heart, still unforgotten—
"The first love is the best."

The first love is the best love,
O sweetheart, dear to me,
Who, by my side unfaltering,
Hast kept so faithfully ;
When in my face you smiling look,
Your eyes make manifest
That rare, true song of days of old :
"The first love is the best."

ROSE BUSH LANE

When Grandma was a girl,
 This fashionable street,
With all its life and whirl,
 Was hedged with roses sweet,
And here, where our house stands,
 The homestead, big and plain,
Amid the meadow lands,
 Stood near the Rose Bush Lane.

With heart of love and cheer,
 One gladsome summer day,
Grandma, a bride, came here,
 Among the roses gay,
And from the leafy trees
 Rang many a lightsome strain
Of song-bird melodies,
 Adrift down Rose Bush Lane.

In that time, long ago,
 How calm life was, and fair,
Till the town began to grow,
 And take a modern air;
Then Grandpa sold, by lot,
 The fields where waved the grain,
Keeping the garden plot
 And house on Rose Bush Lane.

Grandmother says: "Time brings
 A wondrous change, 'tis true,
But garlands that it flings
 Oft mingled are with rue,"
Then to her eye the tear
 Comes, for a subtle pain
Unknown to Grandma dear
 In days of Rose Bush Lane.

Some time, she shuts her eyes,
I think to picture there
A summer's smiling skies,
Wild roses everywhere,
With tender memory,
To live where day dreams reign,
Happy again to be
At home on Rose Bush Lane.

OLD SONGS

The songs, the oldest ever sung,
Were heard in days when Earth was young:

The tender matins of the morn,
The time the rosy clouds are born,

The louder strains that fill the sky,
When day, the victor, rides on high;

Those soft, sweet tones, at close of day,
The even-song when skies grow gray;

And Time has never changed a note,
But let them in their freedom float,

These old, old songs of long ago—
The oldest melodies we know.

'T IS EVENING

'T is evening time, the harbor lies
Bare at ebb tide; the setting sun,
A crimson ball, sinks down and dies,
And day, the busy day, is done,
While landward, in the growing night,
The sea-mist creeps in ghostly white.

'T is evening time; the crimson glow
Has faded from the meadows wide,
O'er which the wintry wind mourns low,
Slow waiting for the rising tide;
And twilight in her misty cloak
Has wrapped the stars, ere they awoke.

'T is evening time, my pretty Rose
Is singing while she thinks of me;
Is singing in the twilight's close,
For I am coming from the sea,
Out of the dark, where white mist lies,
Into the star-shine of her eyes.

NOVEMBER

November's fields lie brown and sere,
When fall the first few snow flakes white,
And through the trees the wind's voice drear
Bewails the darkly drooping year,
The summer days—whose happy light
Had vanished, ere the frosty blight.

November brings the historied feast,
In memory of that long-gone year,
When anguished hearts their sorrow ceased,
And thankful saw their store increased,
When on their sight the ship drew near
That changed their famine into cheer.

Then think we of the storied past,
Its earnestness, its toils and tears,
Whose influence enfolds us fast,—
Each year an echo of the last,
While Time the arch of days uprears
Extending o'er the mist of years.

What care we though the fields lie sere,
That night-time brings the frosty blight,
For winter joys are drawing near
To glad the waning of the year,
When ever-hastening snowflakes white
Bring winter dreams of softer light.

A LETTER FROM THERESS

Dainty, fragrant missive white,
As a weary dove from flight
 Seeks a loved hand's fond caress,
So you come to me tonight,
 Little letter from Theress!

Or, as when a golden star
Sends a trembling beam afar
 From the dusky sky above,
So you, little letter, are
 As a star-ray from my love.

Is it strange that, waiting, I
There unopened let you lie?
 To anticipate is sweet;
Just to know that you are by,
 Makes my pulses faster beat.

And the happy dreams you bring
Are like melodies of Spring,
 Music breathing tenderness;
And within my heart they sing,
 Little letter from Theress.

FAIRYLAND

The twilight hour is full of dreams,
Magical dreams of fairy-land,
When Queen Titania's gold wand gleams,
A gem-tipped star-ray in her hand,
And on the world is cast a spell,
From out the night's enchanted deep,
While pretty tales we softly tell,
To put the little ones to sleep.

We watch the wood-queen's silver bark
Sail slowly up the night-sky sea,
We list for goblins of the dark,
A-frolic at their sylvan glee,
And talk about the moonlit dell,
Where fairies mystic revels keep,
While pretty tales we softly tell,
To put the little ones to sleep.

A realm lives in each childish heart
Where dreams and fancies love to stay,
The land where child-life holds full part,
Where care and sorrow never stray.
In this dim land where fairies dwell,
Through children's eyes we too may peep,
At twilight's hour, when tales we tell,
To put the little ones to sleep.

DOROTHY

The old colonial mansion
That stands across the way
Is built in ancient fashion
With stones moss-grown and gray.

I see a door-way open,
And smiling there at me,
While falls the golden noon-tide,
Is pretty Dorothy.

She wears a gown of lilac,
Dainty, flowered silk;
Above her snowy kerchief,
Her throat is white as milk.

I sigh to be a gallant,
Of those past, wondrous days,
With queue and wig bepowdered,
And quaint and courtly ways.

I'd lift my hat cockaded,
And bow, with bended knee,
To humbly sue the favor
Of Mistress Dorothy.

THE MINUET

The minuet—

There music and the dance coquette,
And maids with quaint ways and sedate,
Tread with a mimic air of state
And steal, perchance, a pirouette.

A dainty dance,
Alight with starry eyes aglance,
That add a bliss most wondrous sweet
Unto the joy of rhythmic feet,
And music's tender charm enhance.

Brave cavaliers
Here tread a measure with their dears,
They bend in lowly way; I trow
The powdered gallants bended so
In long agone colonial years.

The minuet—

Some such fair scene my eyes have met,
Of this most courtly, old-time dance,
Filled with the breath of sweet romance,
Shown in some lovely, rare vignette.

THE CHAFING DISH

It was the early evening gloom,
The flickering taper's yellow light
Made golden shadows in the room,
And on the table polished bright,

When Polly, with her sibyl eyes,
A sweeter lassie none could wish,
Brewed in a way demurely wise,
Rich dainties in the chafing dish.

Her frock was brave with furbelows,
Such as in pictures quaint we see,
Of maids who ruffles donned and bows
With witching arts of coquetry.

A music weird the flames sang low,
The dish seemed tiny caldron fine,
Above the mimic fire's soft glow,
Its antique silver all ashine.

As in enchanted years of old
Were philters steeped in mystic way,
By Circes fair, with locks of gold,
Love potions wielding magic sway.

So Polly, at the fall of night,
With wondrous secret none may tell,
Brewed her rare potions of delight,
And charmed us with a fairy spell.

MY LADY'S SHOES

Tiny shoes of satin white,
Speeding airy as the light
 Thistledown,
Blithely in the dance you keep
Merry measure, as you peep
 From her gown.

Such a taper tip and trim,
Pointed heel atilt and slim,
 Gems galore,
Had that wondrous storied mite,
Cinderella, lost that night,
 Long of yore.

Never with a fleeter tread
Fair nymph's silver sandals sped
 On the sea;
Flew no fairy's golden shoon
Daintier beneath the moon
 O'er the lea.

Poising in a buoyant way,
Oft you twinkle, in a gay
 Pirouette,
Or demure, in pretty state,
Trip you, in a quaint, sedate
 Minuet.

To the music, in and out,
Softly gliding all about,
 At her will,
Till, at last, in grace you rest
On a cushion's velvet nest,
 And are still.

THE EVENING STAR

The decks are gray and the houses brown,
Quaint gabled windows the low roofs crown,
And the evening star looks kindly down,
As it gleams on the sea and shines on the town.

My true love sails, through the night, afar,
Beyond the sound of the harbor bar,
Away from the sight of cliff and scar,
As he follows the light of the evening star.

I send him a kiss on the winds ablow,
That, sweeping seaward, untiring go,
And the evening star alone shall know,
As it beams on the sea and the town below.

AN AUTUMN SONG

When days are weaved of dreamful light,
The leaves are waving, red and gold,
Lo! from the trees, in hosts untold,
Like oriflammes of Autumn bright,
Along the path of Summer's flight
Their farewells flutter manifold,
When days are weaved of dreamful light,
And leaves are waving red and gold.

The crickets chant their music trite,
Quaint, black-robed singers, as of old,
And in dim, grass cathedrals hold,
At eve, the masses of the night,—
When days are weaved of dreamful light.

ROSEMARY

By the margin of the sea,
At dusk, the sedge is whispering,
Where the slim, sprigged rosemary,
In its purple clustering,
Blossometh,
And, light and free,
Sea-winds make a melody.

Shadows come from out the wood,
And purple on the water lie,
Tender as the evening's mood
While the far-off ships go by
Silently,
And, like to these,
So dim, so still, my memories.

Thought, beneath the evening skies,
Recalls sometime forgotten things,
And, while soft, blue twilight dies,
Dreams cherished once again it brings,
Wanderers
From other skies,
That haunt us with remembered eyes.

By the margin of the sea,
At dusk, the sedge is whispering,
And subtle sweetness seems to be
All about me hovering,
Memories
That wake for me,
In perfume of the rosemary.

THE GYPSY ROSE

Gray cottage, moss-grown,
Low on the hill,
Just as in past days,
Now you are still ;
In your trim garden
Lavender grows,
Spikenard and lilies,
And gypsy rose.

Near you are humming
Gold-banded bees ;
Bird songs are drifting
Down from the trees ;
Wafting a fragrance,
Sweet, the wind blows,
Kissing the witching,
Wild gypsy rose.

Did the wee fairies
Down in the dell,
Gray cottage, moss-grown,
Weave a love-spell
Drawing me to you ?
Ah ! my heart knows,
Home of fair Margary,
My gypsy rose.

A PURITAN

In the colonial days
Lived little puritan Prue;
Demure were her quiet ways,
Her eyes as robin's eggs blue,
And her wee, dainty chin
Had a dimple therein.

Her cloak, in the light wind blown,
Discovered her kerchief neat,
Where a sprig of berries shone,
Of frost-kissed bitter-sweet,
As she hastened along,
With a psalm for a song.

Fair as a flower her face,
With cheeks of a pinken glow,
The puritan hood gave grace
To this quaint maid long ago,
With its bow primly tied,
'Neath her round chin beside.

I wis, some young cavalier,
In suit of the sober brown,
With countenance stern and severe
Beneath his hat's tall crown,
Loved the puritan Prue,
With the bright eyes of blue.

A REQUEST

Because I love you
You tread the castle of my dreams;
 No sunrise gleams,
 No mornings break,
 No twilights die,
 Nor star awake,
 But you are by.

Because I love you,
With joy my life's each hour thrills!
 While down the hills
 I watch the sun,
 Then shadows steal;
 To you, each one,
 My thoughts all kneel.

Because I love you,
What gain can fame or riches be
 Save you love me?
 What greater worth
 Could I have chose?
 I ask of earth
 One only rose.

A VALENTINE

These fair blossoms sweet,
That I send today,
Tell you, little maid,
What I long to say.
To their whisper low
May your heart incline,
On this festival
Of Saint Valentine.

Violet and rose,
Rose and violet,
Tell you, little maid,
I shall not forget;
For this message, pray
Grant a smile of thine,
On this festival
Of Saint Valentine.

Tell the violet,
Violet so blue,
Tell it, little maid,
You will aye be true;
Tell it to the rose,
Blushing red as wine,
On this festival
Of Saint Valentine.

OLD CHINA

Fragile is this china old,
And treasured from the days gone by,
Dreamful thoughts about it fold,
Above it light-winged fancies fly.

Lo, the quaint designs that show
The handiwork of art antique;
The style of centuries ago,
These strangely fashioned shapes, bespeak.

On the surface, fair to see,
The slender gilded trimmings twine,
In a dainty tracery,
The graceful leafage of a vine,

Many changing years have flown,
With all their sad and joyful days,
Since sweet Katherine called her own
This china strewn with golden sprays.

Time has waved his magic wand,
To weave the spell that aye endears,
And the china now has donned
The fair enchantment of the years.

BITTER-SWEET

Bending the gray boughs of trees,
With sorrow-haunting melodies,
 The wind within the wood
Lo, alternate, sobs and sighs,
Then, hushing, into stillness dies.

Where the forest shadows lay,
Freely there the sun-beams play,
 Ghost-like in their pallid light,
Stilly, wavering to and fro,
Wraiths of summer's golden glow.

Under foot the crisping leaves
Rustle where the soft wind grieves,
 Minding us of dreams that lived
Long ago, once, in the prime
Of hope's happy summer time.

Here, where tangled briar and vine,
Sere and leafless, clambering twine,
 In its beauty shining forth,
Cheerily, with smiles, we greet,
The blushing, frost-kissed bitter-sweet.

Now the paths of flowers are bare
That were erst-while gay and fair ;
 This fall berry, crimson bright,
To us, wistful, somehow brings
Trends of thought which gladden things.

In this wondrous, lonely place,
The wood, where late dwelt summer's grace,
 In silentness we mediate,
While joy and sorrow, side by side,
In our heart with peace abide.

O season, whose touch changeth all,
Sad, tender, dreamful time of fall,
 To the heart thy voice doth speak ;
For such hours words are not meet ;
Thy symbol is the bitter-sweet.

VESPERTIME

Now, dark first dims the meadow-marsh,
 The wind in gustful music sighs ;
It spurns the reedy grasses harsh,
 And, like a tireless spirit, flies
Unseen, across the evening skies,
 The solitary skies.

And wind-swayed, anchored fishing-boats
 Shine each a lantern, eerily,
Whose mirrored gleam, lo, dips and floats
 Upon the wave, and seems to be
A fallen star, caught, in the sea,
 A star dropped to the sea.

Mysterious breath—Oh, life of night!
 The dreamful gloaming's subtlest part,
From earth to heaven taking flight,
 Coming from the twilight's heart,
Love-song to the stars thou art,
 Oh, wind of night, thou art.

FALL TIDE

The brown leaves down the path-way blow,
In aimless eddying to and fro,
 And today,
The wide, soft sky looks sad and gray,
While chirping, in the fading grass,
The cricket greets us, as we pass.

The wind, with sorrow in its tone,
Sobs on, with muffled sigh and moan,
 Where once grew
The gaudy flowers that it knew;
The house around its chill breaths fold,
Whispering: the days grow cold.

The birds are gone on southward wing,
But memory is echoing
 In the heart
Their merry notes, that seem a part,
Of summer days, so sweet and long,
That followed in the flight of song.

As through some drear, deserted hall,
Down woodland path our foot-steps fall;
 Thought alone
Haunts where joyous life was known,—
Thought that tells us silently
The touch of death is mystery.

Oh, fall-tide day! how oft you seem
The emblem of a vanished dream,
 When our mood
Seeks the spell of solitude,
In some still spot, where we may be
Alone, and dwell with reverie.

MELODIES

O listener, tarrying the bloom-strewn paths among,
Lo, there for you are rare strains sung,
Where nature voices all her mysteries,
Wind, stream, and flower-born melodies.

Amid the flowers is silent music made,
That floats in perfume through the glade,—
A wondrous harmony, that none may know,
And lives but where the flowers blow.

And tuneful whispers through the grasses sing,
Where light and shade their changes fling;
A laughter music purls along the stream,
Where quivering ripples dance and gleam.

Then list the music of a flawless art,
That speaks to every human heart,
That drifts adown the sweet, wild, wooded ways,
The passing songs of summer days.

Full soon the lavish nature songs are sung,
That now across the heart are flung,
And there be none that touch the soul like these,
Wind, stream, and flower-born melodies.

MISTRESS MARY'S WEDDING APRON

On Mistress Mary's wedding day,
In the old colonial time,
Sweet, the gardens were, and gay,
Blooming, in their fragrant prime.

They tell me roses were ablow,
Making pink the country-side,
In those hedges, long ago,
Fitting for so fair a bride.

I wis, the birds began to sing,
When Mary to her marriage stepped,
A vision, radiant of the spring,
As down the quaint old hall she swept.

And o'er her grand frock, daintily,
In housewife fashion, fair of old,
She wore an apron, brave to see,
Embroidered, all, in pink and gold.

The years, with tender touch and light,
Have brushed its satins golden hue,
The broidered roses still keep quite,
Their first deep blush tint, too.

Oh, relic rich in family lore,
What pride of ancestry you bring
Through generations passed before;
You almost seem a living thing.

A gathered wealth of old romance
Enfolds you with ancestral thought,
The old-time beauty to enhance,
As moonlight in a soft mist caught.

And storied memories ever seem,
That cluster round a dear heir-loom,
A fragrance, faint, as in a dream,
Of flowers that fade, no more to bloom.

THE CHARTER OAK

Time's thronging shadows, gather fast
About the deeds of storied years;
The fact that lived in sacred past,
Now as a legend re-appears.

A lofty oak up-reared its head,
With stately branches spreading wide;
To this the red-man pointing, said,
'To us it is a silent guide,

That shows us that the spring draws near,
For when its tender leaves are born—
No larger than the grey-mouse ear—
It then is time to plant the corn.

Oh, white man, let our totem be
And let the listening Indian hark
Unto its whispering boughs and see
Its opening buds—the *spring-tide mark*.'

And so the old tree held its place,
And felt the seasons ebb and flow,
As stalwart as the conquering race
Beneath its boughs—a passing show.

Until at last, it chanced to be
A safe that guarded, as if gold,
The charter of our liberty—
In those grand, earnest days of old.

Around the red man memories fold;
Across the past his shadow wan

Flits on, to silence untold,
Long since; the old tree too has gone,—
For though, by Nature's ruthless hand
Forever was its head laid low;
Its story, on Time's way will stand,
A mile-stone, while the ages go.

THE MARSH MALLOWS

Down in the meadow
Binding the edge,
Rosy marsh mallows
Grows in the sedge.

Light in the sea winds
Fragile cups blow,
Poising, like butterflies,
Rocked to and fro.

Lithe reeds among them,
Tall lances lace,
Swaying together
In rhythmical grace.

Down in the meadow,
Beneath the blue sky,
A cloud of pink beauty,
The marsh mallows lie.

MENUNKETESETTE RIVER

Menunketesette, in the hills,
Welling, is the lucid spring,
Whence your limpid stream out-spills
From its chalice, shimmering,
In a haunt where ferns grow tall,
And the red-cupped mosses hide,
Far above the water fall,
That drops you down the valley side.

River, I have watch you slip
Onward, slowly to the sea,
Where the long, lush sedges dip
At your edges lissomly,
So peaceful is it at your side,
To wander from a world of care,
To feel the calm of meadows wide,
And breathe the salt breath of the air.

A melody there is most blest,
Greater than man's art can give,
Lightening the heart's unrest,
And woes, that fill the life we live,
Where the winds along the grass,
O river, by you lowly sing
A whispered music, as they pass,
To the grasses answering.

You are fairest, when the day
Shows you in the dawning light,
Twining like a ribbon grey,
Through the fields, where mists hang white,
Or when on your shifting flow,
The picture of the new moon lies,
Wavering, golden, to and fro,
Where the forest screens the skies.

At the old bridge, where you swell,
And give your waters to the deep,
Some ceaseless harmony you tell
The restless waves, to which you sweep,
Is it the song, the wood winds sing,
The croon of breezes on the lea,
You heard, and followed listening,
Through wood and meadow to the sea?

FEB 5 1906

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